

November, 2005

Mr. John L. Margowski, Director

LEGISLATURE AMENDS VETERANS PROPERTY TAX CREDIT

(MADISON) - The Wisconsin State Senate and Assembly passed 2005 Senate bill 347 yesterday, November 1, 2005, amending the law for the Veterans and Surviving Spouses Property Tax Credit, which provides property tax relief to Wisconsin's elderly, most severely service-disabled military veterans.

"We greatly appreciate the nearly unanimous efforts of the legislature and its leadership in swiftly passing these needed measures," said Wisconsin Department of Veterans Affairs Secretary John A. Scocos.

The bill provides a fix to clarify the rules for married veterans claiming the property tax credit, whether filing separately or jointly. The bill ensures that elderly, totally disabled eligible veterans will receive the full 100% property tax credit, which was the original intent of the measure to aid Wisconsin's disabled veterans. Current law would have treated eligible married veterans differently than eligible unmarried veterans. Under the bill, if an eligible veteran and spouse file separate tax returns, each spouse may claim a percentage of the credit based on ownership interest.

The Wisconsin Veterans and Surviving Spouses Property Tax Credit provides a refundable state income tax credit for certain veterans and surviving spouses equal to the amount of property taxes paid. Veterans eligible for the credit must have been a Wisconsin resident at the time of entry into active duty, have a federal VA combined service-connected disability rating of 100%, and be age 65 or older. The credit is also extended to an eligible veteran's unremarried surviving spouse. Also eligible for the credit are the unremarried surviving spouses of Wisconsin veterans who die in the line of duty, including those killed in action in Iraq and Afghanistan.

To claim the credit, eligibility must be established with the Wisconsin Department of Veterans Affairs (WDVA), and the WDVA certification must be included when filing the state income tax forms with the Wisconsin Department of Revenue. Eligible veterans and surviving spouses will receive the credit even if they do not have any income tax liability.

For additional information on the credit, visit the WDVA web site, at www.dva.state.wi.us <<http://www.dva.state.wi.us>>, or call 1-800-WIS-VETS (947-8387).